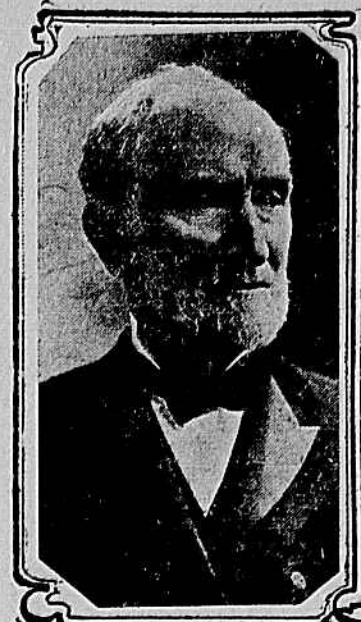
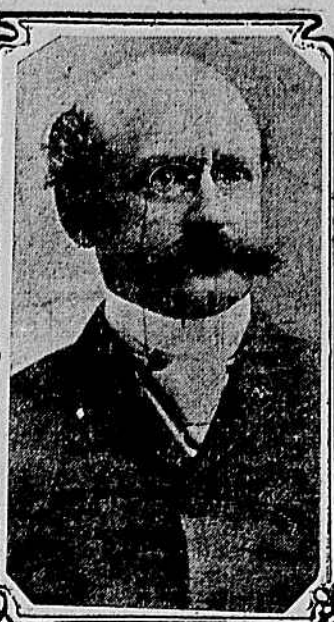
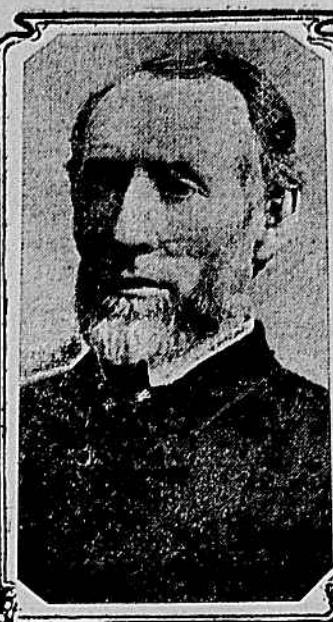


William P. Frye, Senate's New Nestor--Maine Senator Will Receive Mantle to Be Doffed by Hale--Remarkable Career



SPEAKER CANNON.

GEN. H. H. BINGHAM,
Father of the House.SENATOR CULLOM,
Illinois.HON. EUGENE HALE,
Present Nestor of the Senate.HON. WM. PIERCE FRYE,
Next Nestor of the Senate.

BY JOHN ELFRETH WATKINS.
The little giant of the Republicans, William Pierce Frye, will be handed the hallowed mantle of the Senate's Nestor when it is doffed by his retiring colleague, Eugene Hale, of Maine. And thus the honor will remain to the Pine Tree State, which believes in keeping experienced men upon the seats of the mighty in Washington.

In other words, Senator Frye will become the ranking Senator in point of length of service, which is the all potent factor in determining the usefulness of an upper house member. He has but a measly eleven days behind his fellow Fox in his race for the prize, Mr. Hale having entered the Senate March 4, 1881, and Mr. Frye having taken his seat there on the 15th of the same month. So the two Maine Senators virtually began their upper house service together.

The little giant already holds the record for continuous service in Congress, by which we include both houses. He took his seat as a representative more than thirty-nine years ago and has had a seat among the legislators of the United States Capitol ever since. Truly enough Shelby M. Cullom of Illinois had entered the House six years previously, but he was out of Congress a dozen years before returning to the Senate, and Eugene Hale, who had taken his seat in the lower chamber one Congress ahead of his Pine Tree neighbor, was two years in private life between his leaving the House and entering the Senate.

Time Has Touched Lightly.
Seventy-eight years have not found

the snow of old age—only the frost of middle life—upon the head of William Pierce Frye. To look at him from the Senate gallery you would not rate him a jot above sixty. Nor is his small stature apparent until you actually compare him with other men standing near him. The great depth and volume of his voice, the ruggedness of his frame and features and the generous size of his head gives the illusion that he is above the average stature.

His deep forehead shelves out into great arched prominences which, with their bushy—almost fierce—brows, with deep frown-furrows between, give an expression of austerity. His nose is prominent, broad and combative and his long upper lip is covered by a stubble of gray, while his mouth is determined and his chin heavily knobbed. It is the face of a soldier, a mien firm, yet kindly, one which would forbid familiarity from men, yet invite the confidence of little children—a rare combination.

Such is the exterior of the man who has long been recognized as the most skillful parliamentarian upon the Republican side of the Senate. As a result of this mastery, he has been president pro tempore of the Senate ever since his party got control of the upper chamber during the last Cleveland administration. The president pro tempore is the understudy of the Vice-President of the United States, and stands in readiness to preside over the Senate in case of the falling off of that fifth wheel of the coach of State. He has actively presided over three Congresses, those during the vacancy

of the vice-presidency, due to the death of Mr. Hobart and to Mr. Roosevelt's succession to the presidency. None of his predecessors has held his office for so great a number of successive Congresses.

Away down in western Maine and nearly against the New Hampshire line starts the town of Fryeburg. This and considerable of the county round was a public grant to General Joseph Frye in recognition of his military services during the Revolutionary War. This patriot father was the Maine Senator's great-great-grandfather, and it is somewhat of a coincidence that he, too, was the colleague of a Hale—Robert Hale, who commanded a British regiment in the capture of Louisbourg in 1745. This Hale, in whose regiment Joseph Frye was an ensign, was not, however, an ancestor of Senator Hale, but of the late Edward Everett Hale.

Killed His Indian Captor.
This Joseph Frye was captured in the French and Indian War, where he fought as a colonel, and the French placed him in charge of an Indian, but he killed the red man and made his escape, living to receive the commission of major-general in the revolution about eighteen years later. Upon his grant of land he built a homestead, but some of his descendants found their way forty miles eastward in Lewiston. It was here that Senator Frye was born and when he first saw the light. Shelby M. Cullom, next in line for the mantle of the Senate's Nestor, was a child of a year and ten months; James G. Blaine, an infant of a year and seven months, and Chester A. Arthur, a babe of eleven months. James G. Garfield was born when young Frye was seven weeks old, and Benjamin Harrison when he was two years old. Joseph G. Cannon, when he was nearly four, Eugene Hale when he was nearly five, Grover Cleveland when he was five and a half, Tom Reed when he was eight, Aldrich when he was ten and McKinley when he was eleven.

Senator Frye admits that he was not a very good boy at school. He was too full of animal spirit in those days to make a student, although he retained a fair enough standing in class to get into Bowdoin and get his sheepskin there when only nineteen. Traditions of his infractions of college discipline, of his valiant leadership of the college forces in battles royal against gangs of untutored town boys and of his part in personal encounters with his schoolmates still linger about the halls of his venerable alma mater and are quoted to his discomfort by his numerous grandsons, who in succession, have been there in recent years.

It was a fortunate thing for William P. Frye that after leaving college he was placed under the apprenticeship of Senator William Pitt Fessenden, the great anti-slavery Whig, in whose office he commenced his study of Blackstone and the other text books of the law. When he read or heard Fessenden's stirring speeches he dreamed of going to the Senate himself some day, but these dreams were as yet but vague and hazy.

He began his practice when twenty-one and the same year married Miss Caroline Frances Spear, who had been his companion and helpmeet for nearly forty-eight years, when she died in 1900. The same year that young Frye first hung out his shingle, Cullom went to Springfield to begin the study of the law and the same year of seventeen—was spending his third year behind the counter of a Hoosier country store.

Young Frye was blessed with a fine voice, which carried well in the capacious supreme courtroom of Andros-coggin county. He also had the gift of eloquence, and innumerable crowds came to hear the arguments in the cases in which he was of counsel. So in 1861, when he was barely thirty, his neighbors sent him up to the legislature. He went back the next year and again in 1867, when Hale made his entry. Meanwhile Frye had been elected mayor of Lewiston in 1864, and had been elected mayor of Lewiston in 1866. Within these same half dozen years, since '61, Cannon had been distinguishing himself as State's attorney in Illinois, Aldrich had been fighting with Union army, and Cullom after making his mark in the Illinois Legislature, with one term as Speaker, had gone to Washington to sit in the national House.

Within the year 1867, Frye held the three offices of State legislator, mayor and attorney-general. The last appointment was a big thing for a young man only thirty-six. He held it for three years, when a still greater honor was to be in store for him.

This was an election to Congress, and he got it while still on the sunny side of forty. When he entered the House his Maine neighbor, Hale, was just beginning his second term, and Cullom of Illinois, had just retired from Congress after serving three years. Cannon was practicing law in Illinois and was not to come to the House until two years later, when Aldrich had just commenced a term as president of the Providence common council.

Was Blaine's Understudy.
Blaine had been Speaker in the previous Congress and Frye's first act in the House was to vote for the re-election of his friend from Maine. That

Plumed Knight and man of magnetism was again victorious, and Frye became his chief supporter on the floor, help-

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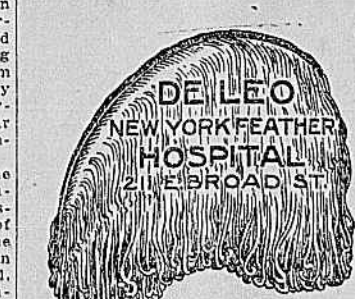
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ing to re-elect him to preside over the House in the succeeding Congress, when Joseph G. Cannon made his first entry into the House, with him coming at the same time Julius Caesar Burrows, of Michigan (now in the Senate), and Stephen B. Ekins, then a delegate from the territory of New Mexico, but now senator from West Virginia.

That man who was destined to be such a great power in the Senate, Nelson W. Aldrich, entered the House after Frye had been there eight years, and with the Rhode Islander came at that time, General Henry Harrison Bingham, of Pennsylvania, who has since remained and who, by virtue of his having seen the longest continuous service in the lower chamber, is now known as the "father of the House," a title which would belong to Speaker Cannon had he not been defeated once for re-election—in 1890. Uncle Joe, however, has served more terms than any other member of the House—eighteen.

Could Have Been Speaker.
The House soon felt the presence of the new Maine member upon the floor. Early in his career he was made chairman of the Judiciary committee and served also on the Judiciary and Ways and Means committees. During several Congresses he was also chairman of the executive committee. On the floor he made such a mark as a skillful debater that in 1880, when the Republicans again got control of the House—Blaine being now in the Senate—it was conceded that the astute representative from Maine would be Sam Randall's successor as Speaker.

But fate decreed that Frye was to serve less than a fortnight of his sixth term in the House. On the day that Garfield was inaugurated, March 4, 1881, Hale took his seat in the Senate and Garfield took Blaine from that body to make him Secretary of the State. So Maine had to choose another new senator, but it was not long in the choosing. Frye had long been looked upon as the understudy of the Plumed Knight, whom he had succeeded as chairman of the Republican State Committee. So the legislators of the State, at once, and with only one dissenting vote elected him to Blaine's seat in the Senate, from which he was to rise, as we have mentioned, to the highest seat which the Senate can confer, that of president pro tempore, an office which was in succession to presidency until the responsibility was conferred upon the officers of the Cabinet.

Wrote the Senate Rules.

Aldrich was promoted from the House to the Senate in less than seven months after Frye's elevation. But the new Maine senator was not to stay in the Senate at first. He had been in the Senate but two years when the work of revising the rules was intrusted to him, and the present code governing debates in the Senate is largely his work. For six years he was chairman of the rules committee. When John Sherman accepted the premiership of the McKinley Cabinet, Senator Frye was offered his place as chairman of the committee on foreign relations, which approves the President's treaties with foreign powers and acts as a special cabinet on diplomatic affairs. But Senator Frye preferred to retain the chairmanship of the committee on commerce, the largest committee of the Senate. This chairmanship he still holds, although he still is second in command on the foreign relations committee. So keen was his knowledge of international law that President McKinley chose him as one of the peace commissioners that closed the war with Spain. But shipping has ever been his specialty, and hardly a law on that subject has passed Congress in the last twenty years without bearing the marks of his handiwork. In 1907, he was re-elected to his sixth senatorial term, at the conclusion of which, in 1913, he will be eighty-one years old. The same year Senator Cullom will close his present term at the age of eighty-three.

Test of Senatorial Dignity.
The familiar term "senatorial dignity" at once causes the picture of Senator Frye to focus itself upon the memory of those who have often studied the Senate from above. When Senators Tillman and Jeff Davis lit turn themselves loose he is the picture of disgust. "Strike out two jackasses" and insert "one mule."

Some time ago during the reading of committee amendments to an Indian treaty the clerk dropped as follows above the grave-like silence of the upper chamber:

"Strike out 'two jackasses' and insert 'one mule.'"

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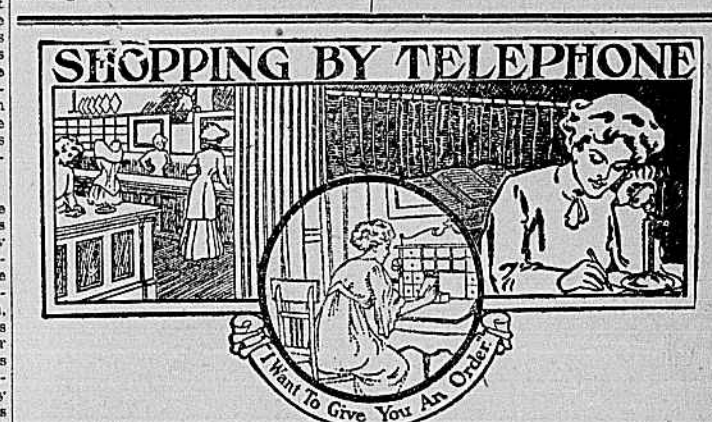
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largest square-tailed trout ever taken with a fly. But some time ago, at a dinner, this boast was challenged by no less an authority than Professor Agassiz. That great naturalist asserted that the Maine senator was in error, for it was a scientific fact that no true trout ever attained the weight mentioned—seven pounds. The following season the senator was fortunate enough to catch an eight pound specimen of the same species, which he packed in ice and sent to Professor Agassiz. The professor acknowledged his defeat in the following laconic line:

"The theory of a lifetime kicked to death by a fact!"

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